



Section 5: Program Partners

Getting Involved:

Statewide Family Networks and National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day

What is National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day?

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Center for Mental Health Services is launching an annual national initiative called "National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day." National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day is designated as a day in May of each year to coincide with "May Is Mental Health Month." This day presents an opportunity for SAMHSA and children's mental health initiatives to promote resilience, recovery, and the transformation of mental health services delivery for children and youth with serious mental health needs and their families.

The theme of the inaugural celebration of National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day is "Thriving in the Community." Children's mental health initiatives will hold similar events and other activities throughout the country to build awareness that children's mental health needs are real and that progress is being made toward developing effective strategies for achieving the vision of a life in the community for everyone.

Why are Statewide Family Network grantees participating in National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day?

National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day offers Statewide Family Network grantees an opportunity to educate people about the services and supports available in their communities, and to show that these services and supports are working. For more than 10 years, Statewide Family Network grantees have worked to improve the quality of life for children who have mental health conditions and their families. During this time millions of children, youth, and families have seen improvements in their lives thanks to this SAMHSA program. Some of these improvements include greater social support raising children who have mental health needs, increased understanding of childhood mental health needs, and improved access to mental health services.

National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day gives Statewide Family Network grantees the opportunity to show the public that children's mental health needs are real and treatable by leveraging May Is Mental Health Month, national SAMHSA activities, and the activities of other SAMHSA partners.

How can Statewide Family Network grantees get involved?

Statewide Family Network grantees can become involved in National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day in several ways. For instance, a program could hold a community outreach event that brings together children, youth, and families in need of services that would not otherwise be engaged. Another event may include partnering with other local children's mental health initiatives to engage the media and to educate local policymakers on effective practices for meeting the mental health needs of children, youth, and families. Statewide Family Network grantees may want to consider contacting their partners to plan for this event.



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Where can I get more information about National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day?

Information and materials on National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day are available online at www.systemsofcare.samhsa.gov. You can also call 916-643-1535, the Technical Assistance Center for the Statewide Family Network grantees, for more information.